THE LADDER

November

FIFTY CENTS

purpose of the

Daughters of BILITIS

A WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF THE HOMOSEXUAL INTO SOCIETY BY:

1. Education of the variant, with particular emphasis on the psychological, physiological and sociological aspects, to enable her to understand herself and make her adjustment to society in all its social, civic and economic implications—this to be accomplished by establishing and maintaining as complete a library as possible of both fiction and non-fiction literature on the sex deviant theme; by sponsoring public discussions on pertinent subjects to be conducted by leading members of the legal, psychiatric, religious and other professions; by advocating a mode of behavior and dress acceptable to society.

2. Education of the public at large through acceptance first of the individual, leading to an eventual breakdown of erroneous taboos and prejudices; through public discussion meetings aforementioned; through dissemination of educational literature on the homosexual theme.

3. Participation in research projects by duly authorized and responsible psychologists, sociologists and other such experts directed towards further knowledge of the homosexual.

4. Investigation of the penal code as it pertains to the homosexual, proposal of changes to provide an equitable handling of cases involving this minority group, and promotion of these changes through due process of law in the state legislatures.

the Ladder

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THE LADDER is regarded as a sounding board for various points of view on the homophile and related subjects and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the organization.

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COVER BY HELEN SANDERS

It's Time For a Change

"It would seem time to reevaluate our thinking and laws about sexual behavior, Dr. Karl M. Bowman, Professor of Psychiatry, Emeritus, University of California, declared in an address before the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco early in October.

He said he advocated translating into United State law the sex provisions of the European Code Napoleon. This body of civil law, promulgated by Napoleon in 1804, provides that "any sexual act carried out by two consenting adults which does not result in physical harm and does not offend public decency is not considered a crime."

Present attitudes toward homosexuality, Dr. Bowman said, "are largely inherited from and based on an ancient Jewish code of 2000 years ago." The Christian religion largely took over the Jewish laws concerning sexual behavior.

"The society in which one lives, " Dr. Bowman contended, decides what sort of sexual behavior can be practiced and what type of sexual behavior would be forbidden by law. These forbidden practices are commonly referred to as perversions."

Biologically, the pyschiatrist remarked, there "is no such thing as perversion."

"Where we have honest differences of opinion about the propriety of certain types of sexual behavior, it would seem that we should rely on education, family training and the influence of society generally (including religious organizations), as a means of dealing with it, rather than by passing laws."

Dr. Bowman, who was medical superintendent of Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Clinic from 1941 to 1956, said he was also against any law which interfered with the sexual life of married people, such as laws depriving

them of birth control information.

"A great many books on marriage counseling recommend acts which are felonies in most of our states," he said.

While New York a few years ago reduced ordinary homosexual acts from a felony to a misdemeanor, California at the same time raised the penalty to a minimum of one year and a maximum of life imprisonment, Dr. Bowman pointed out.

And in the armed forces, an inductee risks an undesirable or blue discharge because of not only homosexual acts, but even homosexual tendencies, he said. "Since some degree of homosexual impulse is present in practically everyone, it is fairly easy to label a large percentage of our population as latent homosexuals and then proceed against them. It seems extremely far-fetched to speak of an individual who has had a few homosexual experiences in childhood or adolescence as an overt homosexual, particularly if as an adult he is leading a completely heterosexual life. Yet this has been reported as occurring and resulting in the discharge of persons in the federal services."

Two Groups of Latent Homosexuals

According to Dr. Bowman, latent homosexuals can be divided into two groups; those who consciously desire homosexual relationships but carefully control these impulses and those who, at a conscious level, have no interest in homosexual relations and even react with digust to such an idea. Of the latter group, he claimed "they do have strong homosexual drives at an unconscious level, and their behavior is often motivated by these drives, which come out in some disguised fashion.

"It seems probable that the tremendous degree of emotion often aroused against homosexuality is largely due to the stirring up of the individual's own repressed or latent homosexual impulses, " Dr. Bowman declared.

The present law, instead of protecting the young and preserving public decency, offers a chance to blackmail

and may indirectly cause suicides, the psychiatrist stated.

"It also helps the homosexual, by giving him a just grievance, to ignore the moral implications of his act.

"I believe that liberalization of sex laws is desirable and backed by some of the greatest authorities in the world," Dr. Bowman concluded.

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Public Press Goes Wild!

FRONT PAGE COVERAGE WAS GIVEN BY THE SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE TO DR. KARL M. BOWMAN'S SPEECH, AND THE ARTICLE PARTICULARLY EMPHASIZED THE PROBLEM OF HOMOSEXUALITY WHICH "MAY FALL SHORT OF BEING SOLVED BECAUSE OF THE LATENT ELEMENT EXISTING IN MANY PERSONS."

THIS WAS A BOLD STEP FOR A FAMILY NEWSPAPER TO GIVE SUCH PROMINENT COVERAGE TO AN EQUALLY BOLD, THOUGH NATIONALLY FAMOUS, PSYCHIATRIST WHO SPOKE BEFORE " A VISIBLY STUNNED AUDIENCE OF PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS PEOPLE." BY CONTRAST THE SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER BURIED DEEP WITHIN ITS PAGES A SHORT ARTICLE NOTING THAT DR. BOWMAN WAS IN FAVOR OF "LIBERALIZATION OF STATE AND FEDERAL SEX LAWS." A SINGLE REFERENCE WAS MADE BY THE EXAMINER TO THE DOCTOR'S VIEW THAT "IT IS WRONG TO PROSECUTE HOMOSEXUALS AS IF THEY WERE CRIMINALS."

THE CHRONICLE'S COVERAGE OF DR. BOWMAN'S TALK IS SIGNIFICANT TOO BECAUSE OF THE RELUCTANCE OF NEW YORK NEWSPAPERS TO GIVE SPACE TO ANNOUNCEMENTS OF THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY CONVENTION IN SEPTEMBER DESPITE THE IMPRESSIVE ARRAY OF SCHEDULED SPEAKERS INCLUDING KENNETH C. ZWERIN, INTERNATIONAL ATTORNEY; FANNIE HURST, RENOWNED NOVELIST; JUDGE MORRIS PLOSCOWE, NEW YORK ATTORNEY AND JURIST; DR. THEODORE S. MEISS, SENIOR PSYCHIAT-

RIST AT BELLEVUE HOSPITAL; THE REV. EDWARD EGAN, JR., AND DONALD WEBSTER CORY, AUTHOR.

ONE NEW YORK MANAGING EDITOR REFUSED TO PRINT AN INTERVIEW WRITTEN UP BY ONE OF HIS REPORTERS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THIS MATERIAL WAS "NOT FIT TO PRINT IN A FAMILY NEWSPAPER." THIS SAME PAPER, OF COURSE, GOES INTO GRAPHIC DETAIL IN ITS COVERAGE OF SUCH "FAMILY" TYPE ITEMS AS RAPE, MURDER, DRUG PEDDLING, ETC. BUT THE OBVIOUS INTENT OF A GROUP TO BRING INTO THE OPEN AND CLARIFY A MUCH MISUNDERSTOOD SUBJECT, TO PRESENT A PROGRAM OF EDUCATION PARTICIPATED IN BY PROFESSIONAL PERSONS, IS SUBJEST TO THIS "CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE."

FINALLY IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT THE CHRONICLE ARTICLE REPEATED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH: "IT IS PROBABLE," HE SAID, "THAT THE TREMENDOUS AMOUNT OF EMOTION OFTEN AROUSED AGAINST HOMOSEXUALITY IS LARGELY DUE TO STIRRING UP OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S OWN REPRESSED OR LATENT IMPULSES."

SINCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE CHRONICLE ARTICLE, IT HAS BEEN NOTED BY READERS THAT THE "LETTERS TO THE EDITOR" COLUMN HAS NOT BEEN FLOODED WITH PROTESTS. ONE LETTER FROM MARK LEWIS GERSTLE, M.D., CHIEF PSYCHIATRIST OF THE CALIFORNIA YOUTH AUTHORITY, SAID IN PART:

"HOMOSEXUALITY IS A BIOLOGICAL IMPASSE OR DETOUR. IT IS UBIQUITOUS THROUGHOUT HISTORY, AT ONE EPOCH CONDONED AND AT ANOTHER CONDEMNED. IT WOULD SEEM THAT NEITHER ATTITUDE IS BEST.

"IT IS FOR THE PSYCHIATRISTS, ANTHROPOLOGISTS, AND OTHER STUDENTS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR TO VIEW THIS PROBLEM DISPASSIONATELY AND DEAL WITH IT IN AN OBJECTIVE AND UNEMOTIONAL WAY. HOMOSEXUALITY HAS ALWAYS BEEN WITH US. IT IS NOT A DISEASE AND CAN NEVER BE ELIMINATED. LET US FACE IT FOR WHAT IT IS, WITH NEITHER SCORN NOR SANCTION...."

-DEL MARTIN

COMING NEXT ISSUE

OUR CHRISTMAS ISSUE IS COMING UP AGAIN - IT DOESN'T SEEM POSSIBLE. WE'LL HAVE MORE STORIES, MORE POEMS, MORE ABOUT OUR NEW CHAPTERS, AND AN ARTICLE OR TWO. IF YOU'RE NOT A SUBSCRIBER NOW, BECOME ONE SO YOU DON'T MISS AN ISSUE. SEE THE BACK COVER FOR DETAILS.

DOB Chapters Formed

SAN FRANCISCO IS NO LONGER THE SOLE CHAPTER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS. TWO NEW CHAPTERS HAVE BEEN ORGANIZED - IN RHODE ISLAND AND NEW YORK CITY. A THIRD GROUP WILL MEET IN THE LOS ANGELES AREA DURING NOVEMBER TO TRY TO FORM A CHAPTER IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

FOLLOWING THE NEW YORK MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 7 UNDER THE DIRECTION OF DEL MARTIN, DOB PRESIDENT, AND PHYLLIS LYON, EDITOR OF THE LADDER, PROVISIONAL CHAPTER STATUS WAS GIVEN TO RHODE ISLAND AND NEW YORK CITY.

THE NEW YORK CHAPTER IS SHARING SPACE WITH THE MATTACHINE SOCIETY AT 1183 SIXTH AVE., NEW YORK 36, N.Y. (TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-1868). NEWLY-ELECTED OFFICERS OF THIS GROUP ARE BARBARA GITTINGS, PRESIDENT; JODY SHOTWELL, SECRETARY, AND MARY DORN, TREASURER. THEY PLAN TO HOLD MEETINGS TWICE A MONTH, A SOCIAL TO FOLLOW ALTERNATE MEETINGS. THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2:30.

ELECTED OFFICERS OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER ARE FRANCES LASALLE, PRESIDENT; MARJORY LEARNER, VICE-PRESIDENT; JANE CARR, SECRETARY; MAY TYLER, TREASURER, AND JEAN CHARLES, LIBRARIAN. TEMPORARILY BUSINESS MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE FIRST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH. FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS WRITE TO THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS, BOX 14, WEST WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND.

SOME TIME IN NOVEMBER, A MEETING AND SOCIAL GET-TOGETHER WILL BE HELD IN THE LOS ANGELES AREA. ANYONE INTERESTED SHOULD TELEPHONE DU 7-3791 (A LOS ANGELES EXCHANGE) ANY EVENING EXCEPT FRIDAY BETWEEN 9 AND 10:30 P.M., BEFORE NOVEMBER 10.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CHAPTER WISHES TO WELCOME THESE NEW ADDITIONS TO THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS. IT HAS BEEN A DREAM OF SOME THREE YEARS THAT ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS COULD BE FORMED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. AND AT LONG LAST THE DREAM IS BECOMING A REALITY. THOSE OF YOU WHO RESIDE IN RHODE ISLAND, NEW YORK OR LOS ANGELES, WE STRONGLY URGE TO GET IN CONTACT WITH THESE NEWLY-FORMED CHAPTERS. THEY NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

Perfect Control

A Story by Vern Niven

Through careful personal discipline Jacqueline Margulies controlled her emotions. In a slow and well thought out manner she had marshalled her defenses in her late 20's and at 38 had achieved a safe and sane life. Her co-workers respected and even feared her slightly. Amiable and untouchable, she moved through the Certified Public Accountants office where she was top accountant: smiling, in her cool quiet way, but never joining in, never belonging, only conforming.

At night she carried her heavy brown briefcase down to her car in the building's lot and drove 15 miles through town to the home she shared with her parents. While cutting personal life out of her scheme of things and conforming in most visible ways, she never conformed in her dress. She wore low brown loafers, hose, straight dark skirts and simple blouses, long-sleeved in winter and short-sleeved in summer. She was neat and clean to a fault. Jackie (as she was known to all) was quite tall, 5' 9", and her shoulders stooped a bit. Her legs were too straight and she did not shave them. The dark hair showed through her sheer hose. Her eyes were lovely--deep rich brown and set wide apart beneath her broad high forehead. Her lips were thin and straight but her nose was perfect--undoubtedly inherited from a Greek god. Her hair was thick and the crinkly waves were touched with gray. She was far too masculine in looks and manner to deceive anyone at all perceptive.

For years the male workers in her office made occasional snide remarks about her "undoubted" personal life - that is- until they worked with her for a while. After a few brushes with her logical detachment, her quick clean mind, they respected and even sincerely liked her. She was the only female C.P.A. in her office but there were many women secretaries, file clerks, and two receptionists. Jackie steadfastly ignored them all outside of necessary courtesy - even on the one or two occasions through the years when a

new receptionist or secretary had evinced obvious interest. Jackie knew that she had to avoid everyone if she were to be able to dress and act as she pleased.

The cost emotionally was damning at times and, when she became financially able, she purchased a fast car and took some of her emotions out on the highways. Nights she read, listened to music and sometimes drank a highball alone in her room. Since she was an only child and her parents were quite elderly, they depended upon her for partial support. They were only too grateful for her help to question her solitary and entirely friendless mode of life. True, her father worried about her sometimes; but would always put her oddities from his mind and turn to other things.

Since all mornings, Monday through Friday, were alike, Jackie probably even walked in her own footprints into the office each morning. On the Tuesday morning when everything changed she was first surprised to hear the sound of typing in the office as she neared the door. She paused, puzzled a moment, and then went in with her customary quick strides. One of the secretaries was industriously bent over her typewriter and did not look up as Jackie passed behind her on the way to her own desk. Pretending to be busily examining her papers, Jackie tried to figure out a legitimate reason for the girl's presence so much earlier than usual. There was none, as far as Jackie could tell, and the press of work was too important to worry about some flighty-headed secretary so she started working and forgot the girl entirely.

Much later, when Jackie left her last account for the day and started home, she tried to remember the girl's name. It was not until dinner, however, that she remembered the only time she had ever spoken to her. They had been introduced by Mr. Hendron, the head of the agency, about six or seven months before. Jackie wooled her mind and then remembered her name; Carol Morgen. Besides the simple exchange of introduction, she could not recall any conversation with this Carol. Impatiently she put the girl from her mind.

The next morning, and every morning after that, the girl,

Carol, arrived at the office before Jackie and they were alone for approximately 30 minutes before the others began to arrive. At first, neither of them spoke; but after four or five mornings of silence, Jackie spoke almost involuntarily on entering the office. "Good morning, Miss Morgen." The girl stopped shuffling the papers before her and smiled directly into Jackie's eyes.

"Good morning, Miss Margulies." Before Carol had finished this return greeting Jackie had reached her desk and neither of them spoke again that morning. Each morning after that they spoke their stilted greetings and matters appeared stalemated. Nearly two months went by and then one noon Jackie returned to a restaurant near the office for lunch and saw the girl, Carol, alone in a booth. Jackie turned abruptly toward the counter but Carol had seen her and called out to her, "Miss Margulies, won't you join me?"

Jackie hesitated and then, in a profusion of embarrassment, walked across the crowded room to Carol's booth and slipped onto the opposite seat with one economical movement. Carol began chattering as though being away from the office had made them bosom companions. Jackie listened almost gratefully, for she did not have to say much in all that stream of nervous chatter. Somehow Jackie got through the lunch and breathed deeply and freely as she hurried away to work. Later that evening, when she was sure the office was empty, she returned, went directly into Mr. Hemdron's private cubicle and looked up Carol Morgen's personnel file. Carol Morgen, age 32, unmarried, no dependents. Jackie's eyes flicked the formal record. It told her little, except that the girl apparently lived alone in a rather nice apartment building in a good section.

When Jackie drove her car out of the lot her mind stayed with Carol. She knew the girl was attracted to her and, of course, she realized she was more than a little interested in return. How to escape was her problem now, how to escape...first from the girl and then from herself. Unwillingly she drove by the apartment listed in Carol's dosier and wondered to herself what the girl was doing.

For the first time in years Jackie could not sleep that

night and between thoughts of Carol, her compact body and fine blond hair, grey eyes and warm face, Jackie thought of earlier years: the years in the service and the parties and Darrell and her conditional discharge and the fear, the fear, the fear.

When she came into the office the next morning, Carol turned quickly on her chair and smiled. Jackie walked past her with a brief nod, without speaking, feeling the blood rise in her head. When she had begun to work, she glanced covertly at Carol over her papers and saw the girl sitting immobile at her desk. The set of Carol's shoulders told her the girl was fighting tears, and shame for her own stupidity filled Jackie. For a few moments she remembered Darrell's damning testimony and her own silence years before.

Then Jackie knew instinctively that this girl was no Darrell. She stood up then and slipped the strap of her purse across her shoulder, slapped her desk drawers shut and walked over to Carol's desk. Jackie put her hand down on Carol's shoulder and the girl looked up at her.

"Come out to coffee with me, Carol, and we'll talk about..' Carol turned back to her desk without a word, took her purse out of a drawer and they walked out together. Once outside, alone on the still comparatively deserted street, Jackie asked Carol where she would like to go and then on sudden impulse took her arm and went toward the building lot for her car.

Carol hesitated momentarily and said in a whisper, "We'll be late."

Jackie smiled at her and said, "We'll be very late and for me that will be the same as a declaration of death. We'll be very late but not too late for us."

The streets were silver in the morning light as they sped out of the city toward their first talk - Jackie quick and sure at the wheel, Carol silent and happy beside her, half turned toward Jackie to watch her face.

/o/o/o/o/o/o/

LESBIANA

72. SHIPS COMPANY BY WILLIAM LAURENCE COLEMAN. LITTLE BROWN, 1955. (DELL BOOKS, 1957)

A COLLECTION OF STORIES ABOUT MEN ON THE U.S.S. NELLIE CROCKER AND SOME OF THE WOMEN THEY KNEW. THERE ARE TWO HOMOSEXUAL INCIDENTS. ONE IS THE MOST SYMPATHETIC WARM LOVE STORY BETWEEN TWO MEN I HAVE EVER READ. THE OTHER IS A LESS SYMPATHETIC BUT INTERESTING AND AMUSING STORY OF A LESBIAN BAR.

73. INTIMATE STORY BY ROSE FRANKEN. DOUBLEDAY, 1955

THIS IS A BEAUTIFULLY WRITTEN STORY OF A WIDOW WHOSE CHILDREN ARE GROWN AND MARRIED, WHO MUST ADJUST TO HER NEW LIFE OF LONELINESS. SHE BECOMES FRIENDS WITH A YOUNG LESBIAN PLAYWRIGHT WHO HAS RECENTLY LOST HER LOVER. NOTHING CONCRETE COMES OF THIS FRIENDSHIP BUT THE WIDOW MAKES AN IMPASSIONED PLEA FOR ACCEPTANCE AND SYMPATHY FOR FEMALE HOMOSEXUALS WHEN HER DAUGHTER SCOFFS AT THEM.

74. THE GOLDEN JUNGLE BY WILLIAM HOWARD HARRIS. DOUBLEDAY, 1957.

BRITTLE NOVEL ABOUT A WALL STREET BROKER AND HIS WORLD. HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE IS A LESBIAN UNBEKNOWNST TO ALL. HE NAIVELY BELIEVES HER FAITHFUL BECAUSE SHE PREFERS THE COMPANY OF WOMEN. HER DENOUMENT IS HIS ENTRANCE INTO HER BOUDOIR UNANNAOUNCED. THEY DIVORCE AND HER FATE IS NOT DISCLOSED.

75. JANE BY PHYLLIS BOTTOME. VANGUARD, 1957.

THE LIFE OF A STREET URCHIN IN ENGLAND. THE PERIOD SPENT IN A GIRLS REFORMATORY IS ENTIRELY LESBIAN.

76. LOUISVILLE SATURDAY BY MARGARET LONG. RANDOM HOUSE, 1950

THIS IS A COLLECTION OF INTERELATED STORIES OF WOMEN IN WARTIME. THE LESBIAN INCIDENTS ARE IN TWO CHAPTERS ENTITLED "GLADYS".

mood miscellanea

WINDOW SHOPPING

I saw you, strolling down the street together.
"Two girls out shopping," smug Convention said.
Convention is at times so unobserving,
Convention overlooked the carefree tread
Of steps aimed toward pursuit of happiness
Rather than mundane errands; did not spy
The intertwining of slim, gentle fingers,
The furtive glances, half bold, yet half shy.
Your touseled, unbound tresses intermingled
As you both bent close, apparently to stare
At dresses in the windows. (Those same windows
reflected two ecstatic faces there!)
No, Convention did not see, she would have frowned.
But I saw, and my heart was deeply moved
As I recalled my days of gay romancing.
I smiled and wished you well, for I approved.

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SMALL ROOMS

"This is the beginning
of intolerance and error -
that shrivels men's souls
and makes angry flaming
scars of their mouths:

Small rooms that lock
them off from their brothers;
Little rooms built by
shame and ignorance."

- Sten Russell

A POEM

Restless Soul,
will you be still?
will you be calm?
and hold your will?
Your will to love -
and to possess -
I cannot tame you,
Soul, unless
You hold your passion -
Raving, wild,
And hide it -
Deep within.

- Audrey Kern

BIOCHEMIST TO HIS LOVE

O Maid with lustrous soulful eye
That beguileth every passerby -
Alas, for all thy beauty's worth,
Composed thou are of common earth:
H_2O, and soda-brine,
Anions, cations all entwined!

O Form of lithesome winsom way
Wrapped in mirth and laughter gay -
Alas, for all thy wile and art
Of atoms made! and in part
Of random charge and whirl and spin
Of mesons going out and in.

But whether atoms, else thou be
A combine strange enough for me,
I marvel for all eternity
The Miracle that composes thee!

- Barbara Stephens

by Abigail Sanford

HORIZONS

Can it be only chance that when you came
Our weary weather lifted, and the sky
Turned crystalline, with lucent golden air
Giving us hills again enamel-clear
Gainst the blue in smooth wine-shadowed waves
Aglow with amber light and evergreen?
Or that - beyond the dimmest hope of seeing
On all save one charmed day or two in a year -
We should have caught a far peak's misty line,
And from the gleaming reach beyond the rim
Poured warm and vivid, soft and fresh, a wind
That was the very tingling stuff of life?
I cannot tell. I only know you came.

TO ONE DEPARTING

Watching as ever your beloved face
Here at my side, it is not you I see,
But that frail ghost who will be left to me
When presently another has your place.
Oh, I have known long since what aching space
My heart will hold when grey futility
And all the empty mock of being free
Slowly the bittersweet of love replace...
But now I know that sometimes unaware
I shall look up, and - memory aflame
At an old tune, or syllables of your name -
See in that other's stead a shadow there -
Your deathless grace that was so dear a pain -
And win the sharp ecstasy of tears again.

HEALING

Other hands I loved once
   Proudly tense and white,
But those hungry fingers
   Would tear my heart tonight.

On all its empty aching
   Falls your still touch -
You who, understanding, never
   Ask too much . . .

SONNET OUT OF SERENITY

True, you have had no verse of me, my dear;
And since my verses are of love, so you,
Lacking them, seem unloved. It is not true.
You have but freed me from old pain and fear -
Verse being wrung from me in hard distress,
A fever of the blood that will not cool,
Black self-abasement for a weakling fool.
Aching that knows no ease, and bitterness.
Oh, I have waked at dawn and wished for death
When verse was on me. But, beloved, you
Have brought me life lovelier than I knew
Life was - a space of laughter and quiet breath;
Strength you have given me and joy and rest,
Light on my forehead, peace against my breast.

VIGNETTE FROM A CAMPUS WINDOW

Slenderly upright, crisp, austere,
   With casual gait across the green -
As Haydn's music proud and clear,
Slenderly upright, crisp, austere -
Have you no need of others near
   Who walk so grave, aloof, serene,
Slenderly upright, crisp, austere,
   With casual gait across the green?

The Repressed Lesbian

by Gene Damon and Lee Stuart

In February, 1958, a book entitled Call Girl, by Harold Greenwald, M.D., was published by Ballantine Books, Inc. This book is subtitled "A Social and Psychoanalytic Study." It attempts to analyze the primary reasons why over 20 attractive young women are highly paid prostitutes. These women are far from the drab streetwalker stereotypes whose confessions appear only after they have reached the depths of degradation. They are, for the most part, young, relatively healthy, and at least temporarily wealthy. Dr. Greenwald brings out in his book an oft hinted at and seldom discussed fact: That more than half of the women who prostitute themselves are either partially or wholly repressed Lesbians. Even in cases where there is no definite evidence of attraction to women, there is found certain indefinite ideas in sex differentiation. Dr. Greenwald also notes a tendency among these repressed Lesbian cases to drink to excess. Conversely, no such alcoholism seems to be present in the few overt cases he cites. In studying the background writing on this subject it becomes apparent that social condemnation of Lesbianism clearly contributes to the wanton and degrading life in which these women become enmeshed.

Going back many years we find that Pierre Louys' heroine, Bilitis, was at one period of her life a courtesan and that she and her fellow courtesans were Lesbians.[1] After they had consorted with men without any pleasure either physical or mental, they consoled one another.[2] It is made abundantly clear that Bilitis and her friends vastly preferred women to men; but in that day and age men were an economic necessity.[3] While man is certainly not an economic necessity today, the large number of latent homosexual women who are married (most often unhappily) shows that socially it still takes intestinal fortitude to go against the popular tide, i.e., marriage, family, etc.

Dr. Benjamin Karpman in his book, Alcoholic Women, closely analyzes the entire lives of three alcoholic women. In two

of these women a sordid path of promiscuity coupled with excessive drinking is definitely shown to be the result of having repressed Lesbian tendencies.[4] Dr. Karpman then goes on to show that, had these women admitted their feelings of attraction to their own sex in time, their lives could not possibly been so self-destructive.[5] Dr. Karpman contends that social condemnation of Lesbianism caused guilt feelings so strong in these women that they virtually destroyed their own lives.[6]

This kind of personal negation (denial of Lesbianism) is apparent in fictional Lesbian characterization as well. In The Illusionist by Francoise Mallet, the Lesbian woman protagonist has in her past loved only one person, another woman. After losing her, she spends the rest of her life in promiscuity with both men and women. In the end, as she feels herself aging, she marries a man she does not love.[7] She consistently denies her true path in life even to herself and ends by sacrificing the last of her personal integrity by marrying for economic security.

It would be morally wrong for a heterosexual woman to be forced to lead a homosexual life: It is equally wrong and fairly ridiculous for our current mores to force a Lesbian woman into heterosexuality. Certainly, if all women with Lesbian tendencies were to miraculously lose all their guilt feelings, it would not end prostitution or alcoholism in women; but it would undoubtedly lower the statistics on both counts.

It is a popular Lesbian vanity to consider ourselves all intellectual, all artistic, etc. This simply is not true. One of the reasons that a great many active or overt Lesbians are intellectual is that they discerned their personal inclinations and all of the implications far more readily than their less intelligent sisters. Certainly it would be preferable for a miserably unhappy married woman, or a prostitute, or an alcoholic woman, or any combination of these who are fighting Lesbian tendencies, or just failing to acknowledge them, to turn to guidance centers, psychiatrists, etc., than to go on destroying themselves. In many cases a disturbed repressed individual can be helped to the point where an easy and satisfactory adjustment to overt Lesbianism is made. With this sort of help, many socially non-productive, and even morally des-

tructive people can be turned into useful citizens.

It is the personal belief of both authors that at some near future date sex education will improve in general and become less specifically heterosexual in tone. Perhaps at this point more of us will discover our homosexual tendencies at an early enough age to make a gradual adjustment possible. This step alone will clear up some of the more pressing social problems. It will certainly help to curb the steadily increasing rate of divorce and vastly cut down the cases of alcoholism, promiscuity, minor mental and emotional breakdowns and related problems in both men and women.

We must add that such organs of the free press as THE LADDER and ONE are an important step along the lines of liberalizing public opinion on Lesbianism as well as a means of communication between the well-adjusted Lesbian and the maladjusted Lesbian. We who are fortunate in having built good lives for ourselves in spite of social pressures must reach out a helping hand to others like us who are not so fortunate emotionally or mentally.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND NOTES

1. Louys, Pierre, Songs of Bilitis, Avon Edition, 1955, Songs #XCVI and #XCVII.

2. Ibid., Songs #CIV and #CVI.

3. Ibid., Song #CXXXVIII.

4. Karpman, Benjamin (M.D.), Alcoholic Women, Linacre Press, 1948, pp. 75-76, 109-111, 131-137.

5. Ibid., p. 221.

   In her exaggerated heterosexuality, aided always by alcohol, she became far more socially objectionable than might have been the case if she had been able to accept the fact of (her) homosexuality and attempt a homosexual adjustment...

6. Ibid., p. 141 (see also pp. 142-232).

The patient's heterosexual history is one long narrative of definite stupidity. Realizing her homosexual tendencies and fearing them, she embarked upon a futile and mad career of promiscuity and drunkenness. When she wasn't seeking an escape from homosexuality in the embraces of some man, she was seeking it in alcohol and often she sought it simultaneously in both. She tells us that she had sexual relations with more than 300 men. She made a failure of marriage, she contracted gonorrhea, she was in and out of jails and hospitals, all to escape the stigma of being called a Lesbian. In trying to avoid the accusation of homosexuality she became lower and more despicable than any homosexual. Homosexual from the first, she was the last to admit it.

Mallet, Francoise, The Illusionist, Farrar, 1952.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7 - GAB 'N JAVA SESSION AT 3927 ARMY ST., 8 P.M. THIS INFORMAL DISCUSSION-TYPE GET-TOGETHER IS LIMITED TO WOMEN ONLY. AND GIRLS, IT REALLY GIVES YOU A CHANCE TO LET YOUR HAIR DOWN AND DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS NEAR AND DEAR TO YOU.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12 - DOB BUSINESS MEETING FOR ELECTION OF OFFICERS. 8 P.M. 2173 CALIFORNIA ST., BASEMENT APARTMENT. IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND DON'T FAIL TO SEND IN YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT TO THE DOB OFFICES SO IT WILL ARRIVE NO LATER THAN TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22 - LADDER WORK PARTY. NOTE USE OF THE WORD "PARTY". THIS IS NOT ALL WORK. COME ON DOWN FOR AN HOUR OR TWO, FROM NOON ON, TO THE DOB OFFICES AND HELP US ASSEMBLE AND MAIL THE CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF THE LADDER.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5 - GAB 'N JAVA AT 2217 FILLMORE ST., 8 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31 - PLAN TO SPEND NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE DOB PARTY - A FITTING CLIMAX TO 1958. FOR MEMBERS AND THEIR GUESTS ONLY. FURTHER DETAILS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE BUSINESS MEETING OR BY CALLING THE DOB OFFICE.

READER'S RESPOND

"I THOROUGHLY ENJOY READING EACH ISSUE OF THE LADDER. I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHERE I MIGHT OBTAIN SOME OF THE BOOKS YOU LIST FROM TIME TO TIME UNDER THE FEATURE 'LESBIANA'. I CANNOT SECURE ANY OF THEM IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THIS CITY, NOR CAN I EVEN GET THEM FROM THE STATE LIBRARY AT INDIANAPOLIS. I WOULD LIKE TO EITHER BUY SOME OF THESE BOOKS OR BORROW SOME OF THEM TO READ."

E.W., NEW CASTLE, IND.

* * * * *

"I AM A RECENT SUBSCRIBER AND HAVE JUST RECEIVED THE FIRST ISSUE OF SEPTEMBER, 1958, AND AM VERY MUCH PLEASED WITH SAME, AND I KNOW YOU ARE DOING A WONDERFUL JOB FOR WHICH I COMMEND YOU MOST HIGHLY.

"I AM GREATLY INTERESTED IN THE BOOKS LISTED ON PAGE 15, LESBIANA. WILL YOU PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHERE I CAN PROCURE THESE BOOKS, THE PUBLISHER AND PRICE OF SAME, OR IF I MAY ORDER THEM THROUGH YOUR OFFICE.

"STAMPS ENCLOSED FOR YOUR REPLY, ALSO SMALL DONATION. I AM ISOLATED HERE, SO YOU CAN REALIZE HOW REFRESHING IT IS TO READ ABOUT THOSE THAT I HAVE THINGS IN COMMON WITH."

J.W.D., MAUSTON, WISC.

BOOK DEALERS - ATTENTION!!

THE LETTERS ABOVE ARE BUT TWO OF MANY. METHINKS IT WOULD BEHOOVE YOU TO ADVERTISE IN THE LADDER. RATES ON REQUEST. - ED.

TO YOU, E.W. AND J.W.D., WE DO NOT AS YET HAVE A BOOK SERVICE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE LADDER OR THE DAUGHTERS OF BILITIS. IF THE BOOK DEALERS IN YOUR CITY CANNOT FIND THE BOOKS YOU WANT MANY DEALERS IN LARGER CITIES SPECIALIZE IN FINDING OUT OF PRINT OR HARD TO GET BOOKS, OR EVEN THOSE ON CERTAIN SUBJECTS, SUCH AS LESBIANISM. -ED.

"IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY READ THEM, I WOULD SUGGEST YOU REVIEW THE FOLLOWING BOOKS, ALL OF WHICH, I BELIEVE, ARE AVAILABLE AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

'WAIT 'TIL TOMORROW' BY ROBERT WILDER

THE MAIN CHARACTER IN THIS WELL-WRITTEN BOOK IS A LESBIAN AND THE SUBJECT IS HANDLED IN GOOD TASTE.

'THE MESH' BY LUCIE MARCHAL

PRIZEWINNING FRENCH NOVEL. HAS BEEN PUBLISHED IN THIS COUNTRY BOTH IN CLOTH AND PAPER EDITION. THIS IS AN EXCELLENT STORY WITH SUSPENSE AND A SOLID PLOT.

"UNDER SEPARATE COVER I AM SENDING YOU EIGHT PACKAGES (ABOUT 6,600) DUPLISTICKERS FOR YOUR USE IN MAILING THE LADDER. THESE WERE LYING AROUND UNUSED AT MY OFFICE AND WERE ABOUT TO BE DISCARDED. I THOUGHT PERHAPS YOU WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THEM."

V.N., SAN LEANDRO, CALIF.

THANK YOU SO MUCH. THIS WAS LIKE MANNA FROM HEAVEN. ALL CONTRIBUTIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED. - ED.

* * * * *

"AFTER HAVING READ THE ARTICLE 'WE VS. INSURANCE' IN THE JUNE ISSUE OF THE LADDER AND THE SUBSEQUENT REPLIES ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR, I SHOULD LIKE TO ADD MY OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THIS CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT.

"IT HAS BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME BY MY INSURANCE BROKER THAT THE REASON FOR THE HIGHER COST OF INSURANCE (FOR JOINT TENANCY HOMEOWNERS IN THE NAME OF BOTH HOMEOWNERS) IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE SUICIDE FACTOR

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AND THE INCENTIVE FOR PERSONAL MATERIAL GAIN.

"EACH OF US HAS HEARD OF, OR BEEN CLOSE TO, ATTEMPTED SUICIDES AMONG HOMOSEXUALS AND IN ADDITION, OUR DIVORCES ARE NOT AS EFFICIENTLY HANDLED AS WE WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE. WE SPEAK OF INTELLIGENT BREAK-UPS, BUT WHO KNOWS THE ENSUING RESULTS OF AN EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT, PARTICULARLY TO US AS A GROUP WHERE COURTROOM SCENES ARE EMBARRASSING AND PROPERTY SEPARATION LEGALITIES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THAN IN HETEROSEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS.

"IT IS, HOWEVER, POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN INSURANCE IN DUAL ISSUANCE THAT IS EQUALLY PROTECTIVE TOWARD BOTH PARTIES. THE COST IS, OF COURSE, HIGHER, AND BOTH PARTIES ARE THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATED BY THE UNDERWRITING UNIT. WERE I AN INSURANCE COMPANY I WOULD BE EQUALLY AS CAUTIOUS WITH WHOMEVER I INSURED. WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

"CAN AN INSURANCE COMPANY REALLY BE BLAMED FOR CAUTION WHEN THEY ARE AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE LEGAL COSTS TO THEIR FIRM RESULTING FROM SUCH POLICIES? IT IS NOT THE COMPANIES WHO NEED TO ALTER THEIR ATTITUDES, BUT RATHER WE WHO MUST LIVE IN OUR SOCIETY, LEARNING TO EVALUATE THE SOCIAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING US WITH UNDERSTANDING AND DIPLOMACY."

A.J., OAKLAND, CALIF.

* * * * *

"I'VE JUST OBTAINED MY FIRST COPY OF THE LADDER AND READ IT COVER TO COVER. MY INDIFFERENT EXTERIOR WHILE READING IT BELIED THE INTEREST I FELT INSIDE! ALTHOUGH I BELIEVE THE STORIES AND ARTICLES INCLUDED COULD BE BROUGHT UP TO A MUCH HIGHER CALIBER, BOTH IN CONTENT AND STYLE, IT IS STILL A PLEASURE TO SEE AN HONEST PUBLICATION DEDICATED TO THE PURPOSE OF THE WOMEN."

M.H., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

* * * * *

"TO YOU AND YOUR CO-WORKERS MANY GOOD WISHES FOR YOUR WORK. I KNOW VERY WELL THAT IN OTHER COUNTRIES SEXUAL DEVIATION IS CONSIDERED AN ABNORMALITY TO BE CURED, NOT A CRIME. THIS THEORY WILL NOT SO SOON BE ADMITTED IN AMERICA. IT IS LIKE RELIGION WITHOUT REVELATION."

DR. A.S., LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

"IN THE JULY ISSUE OF THE LADDER I'VE APPRECIATED DEL MARTIN'S 'MORALITY AND THE LAW.' I APPROVE OF 'FOR WHENEVER THERE IS A TREND TOWARD SUPPRESSION OF THE PRESS, THERE NECESSARILY FOLLOWS THE SUPPRESSION OF FREE THOUGHT.' THAT IS VALID EVERYWHERE.

"IN FRANCE ALSO, MANY PEOPLES CONSIDERING THEMSELVES AS SUPPORTER OF LIBERTY, KEEP HOWEVER MANY PREJUDICES TOWARDS MINORITIES (SEXUAL MINORITIES SPECIALLY).

"I THINK THE 'MORALITY' IS SOMETHING QUITE RELATIVE AND I CONSIDER THE FIRST LIBERTY IS THE LIBERTY IN THE PRIVATE LIFE, IN THE SEXUAL LIFE."

P.L., PARIS, FRANCE

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Publications Workshop Scheduled

A progress Survey and Seminar covering the problems and new events of publications dealing with education in the sexual field is being sponsored Saturday, December 6, by the Publications Department of the Mattachine Society.

This workshop discussion will feature representatives of THE LADDER, Mattachine Review, ONE Magazine and the newest member of the field, Sex and Censorship. The latter is a slick cover magazine appearing for the first time. It is primarily concerned with the problem of censorship in relation to sexual matters. Publisher is the Mid-Tower Publishing Corporation, 693 Mission St., 406-407, San Francisco 5, Calif. Issued bi-monthly, subscription price is $6.00 for 12 issues.

The Publications workshop will begin about noon at the Mattachine Society offices, Suite 312, 693 Mission St., San Francisco. A cocktail hour will precede the banquet. Cost, including the banquet, will be $5.00. Further information available from the Mattachine Society or the DOB.

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ONE MAGAZINE—deals primarily with homosexuality from the scientific, historical and critical point of view. It contains articles, short stories, poetry, news items, book reviews and letters from readers. A popular magazine has called it 'The Voice of U. S. homosexuals.' Subscriptions $5 per year in U. S., Canada and Mexico, $6 elsewhere; all copies mailed first class sealed. Single issues 50 cents each, postpaid.

ONE INSTITUTE—planned adult education facility, offering college level courses in socio-sexual studies. Write for information.

ONE BOOK SERVICE—handles distribution of all books published by One, Inc., as well as other current and recent titles on homosexual and related themes. Write for latest listings.

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—CARLYLE

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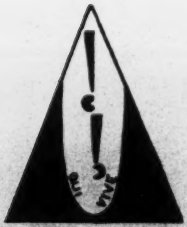
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